

Billy Brock
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DDS Cuts

Thank you to the co-chairs, Senator Osten, Senator Formica, and Representative Walker, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Billy Brock and I am a Developmental Service Worker 2 at the Meriden Transitional Unit. I am testifying today to urge the committee to reject the \$25 million in cuts that the Governor has proposed to DDS. This includes closing the Meriden campus. Although most of the campus has closed, the Transition Unit and respite center remain open.

For the people we work with, the alternative to the TU is jail or prison. There are no programs in either. The purpose of the Meriden Transitional Unit is to provide a place to help those with clients who are ID/DD with incidents with the law-- who would be improperly placed in correctional settings.

At the TU, we have been quite successful in providing clients with the tools they need to avoid reoffending. The staff at the TU are trained to work with this population- and we have been quite successful. We have many powerful stories about individuals who have made successful transitions. The services we provide are not available to these clients in jail or prison.

Please review Dr. Hyde's report on privatization of care for the intellectually and developmentally disabled population in Connecticut. It questions the savings attributed to the loss of state jobs, and argues that the loss of middle class jobs caused by privatization of these services will be bad for the state's economy. The website is pausebuttonforddsfiveyearplan.org

I'm here today to urge you to publicly commit to keeping the remaining services on the Meriden campus open, so we can continue our important work. I urge you to disregard the cuts requested in the Governor's budget and work with us going forward to find a way to help us provide the best care to our families.